

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Corps of Engineers, Omaha District
215 North 17th Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68102-4978

DR 350-1-1

CEMRO-HR-E

Regulation
No. 350-1-1

12 February 1996

Training
UPWARD MOBILITY PROGRAM

1. Purpose. To prescribe the latest policies, procedures, and responsibilities for the implementation of the Department of Army Upward Mobility Program.

2. Applicability. This regulation applies to all permanent employees of the Omaha District and serviced installations in grades GS-8 and below, or wage grade equivalents, who are in dead-end or limited advancement positions and who have the potential and self-motivation to perform higher level work.

3. Reference.

- a. Title 5, CFR 351.403, Administrative Personnel.
- b. AR 690-300, Employment, Chapter 14, Upward Mobility.
- c. AR 690-400, Employee Performance and Utilization, Chapter 410, Training.

4. Policy. The principle of equality of opportunity requires that all persons have the opportunity to seek and achieve their highest potential and productivity in employment. Necessary action will be taken to assure fullest possible utilization of the skills and potential of underutilized or underdeveloped employees and to provide these employees with opportunities to improve their knowledges, skills, and abilities to qualify for advancement. Target positions will be identified to provide maximum opportunity for lower graded employees to advance and to perform at their highest potential. These positions will be announced to the workforce under the Merit Promotion Plan on individual vacancy announcements and will be filled with candidates selected through the merit process.

5. Definitions.

a. Upward Mobility. A systematic management effort focusing Federal personnel policy and practice on the development of specific career opportunities for lower graded employees (below GS-9 or equivalent), who are in positions or occupational series which do not enable them to realize their full work potential.

b. Underutilized Employees. Employees whose education, training, and capabilities are not fully utilized in their present positions. These employees currently meet the qualifications standards for other positions which offer greater growth potential.

c. Underdeveloped Employees. Employees whose potential can be identified and developed through specialized training and work experience, thus enabling them to perform at a higher level than their present position requires. These employees require additional training and/or experience to meet the qualification requirements of the targeted position.

d. Potential. The ability and desire to acquire and use skills and knowledges needed to successfully perform higher level work.

e. Job Restructuring. The technique of rearranging the way the work of an organizational segment is accomplished with tasks grouped into jobs linking lower to higher skill functions to develop a progression of training and experience. This will provide opportunities for employees in low level jobs to advance within and across occupational lines.

f. Target Position. An established position for which underutilized or underdeveloped employees will be competitively selected and trained.

g. Bridge Position. A trainee position in which an employee, who has been competitively selected, is placed to gain the skills necessary to qualify for a target position.

6. Program Objectives.

a. To obtain more effective use of the capabilities of employees who are in dead-end or limited advancement positions and who have the potential and self-motivation to perform higher level work; and, ultimately, to "look beyond" present official duties to the time when they may assume greater responsibility in more demanding positions.

b. To provide upward mobility opportunities for employees whose current assignments offer limited advancement opportunity, through assessment of known vacancies, job restructuring, job engineering, developing bridge positions, or creation of new positions when missions change.

c. To select trainees, provide career counseling, establish appropriate training and educational programs to prepare

employees to function effectively in designated target positions, and monitor and evaluate progress and achievement.

d. To inform all eligible employees about the program through this regulation as well as employee orientation programs.

e. To train all managers and supervisors in the objectives and operation of the program.

7. Relationship to EEO. The Upward Mobility Program is available to all lower grade employees; however, due to the disproportionate concentration of minority and women employees in lower graded positions, emphasis will be provided to ensure their representation in programs and other efforts designed to enhance opportunities and prepare employees for advancement. Progress and achievements in upward mobility will be included in the annual update of the Affirmative Employment Plan.

8. Responsibilities.

a. An integral part of the responsibility of management and supervision is the full and impartial development and utilization of employees' skills. The Upward Mobility Program is designed to assist in carrying out this responsibility in a manner which will broaden and equalize available opportunities. Managers and supervisors will:

(1) Become thoroughly familiar with the objectives and procedures of the Upward Mobility Program.

(2) Identify career ladders and provide opportunities for upward mobility by job restructuring in their offices insofar as the availability of manpower spaces and funds and the composition of the work force permit.

(3) Prepare individual development plans for employees selected for upward mobility positions, provide the training and experience needed by employees to qualify for advancement, counsel employees, and monitor their progress.

b. Equal Employment Opportunity Officer and Federal Women's Program Coordinator will participate with the Human Resources Office staff in orientations, briefings, selection panels, and program review and analysis.

c. The Human Resources Office is responsible for administration of the Upward Mobility Program. The Human Resources Officer will designate an Upward Mobility Program Coordinator to serve as leader of a team made up of specialists

from each branch of the Human Resources Office. The Coordinator and team members are responsible, on a continuing basis, for developing and implementing the overall program. The Upward Mobility Coordinator is also responsible for maintaining liaison and providing close coordination between the Human Resources Office, the Equal Opportunity Officer, and Federal Women's Program Coordinator. The District Training Officer is currently the Upward Mobility Coordinator.

(1) Classification and Staffing Branch will:

(a) Assist employees and supervisors by providing information on career programs and patterns of organizations.

(b) Assist supervisors and managers in developing career ladders including restructuring positions and preparing "bridge" and target position descriptions.

(c) Advise management regarding classification possibilities of bridge positions.

(d) Set up and maintain a register of separate competitive level codes for upward mobility positions.

(e) Maintain qualification requirements on all positions. Certify formal development plans.

(f) Conduct recruiting campaigns which stress opportunity and employee responsibility in development activities.

(2) Employee/Labor Relations and Training Branch will:

(a) Assist employees in the attainment of their goals by providing specific information on the availability of courses, management needs, career patterns, and other factors affecting opportunities.

(b) Recommend to supervisors and employees various methods of achieving career goals.

(c) Emphasize both management supported training and self-development activities.

(d) Provide, or coordinate access to, developmental resources needed to accomplish career development plans for employees.

(e) Prepare and distribute program information to

employees, supervisors, and managers. Dissemination will be provided by means of orientations, briefings, or printed releases as required to achieve effective communication.

(f) Maintain records and submit reports as required concerning program implementation and individual employee participation.

d. Employee will:

(1) Apply for upward mobility positions.

(2) Assist in assessing his/her aptitudes, strengths and weaknesses, and identification of career goals. Assist in developing a plan which will contribute to the attainment of these goals and accept developmental assignments.

(3) Complete all training specified in the development plan in a timely manner.

(4) Seek and use all means of self-development available.

9. Program Procedures.

a. Position Coverage. Career ladders with appropriate target positions will be identified that offer opportunities for entrance into or advancement in a technical, administrative, professional, or trade career. Underutilized employees who demonstrate specific skills or potential for development will be selected under the program. Selected employees will be assigned to established bridge positions in accordance with applicable regulations and procedures. Target positions will be established with consideration of the organization's need for the positions and the availability of funds and spaces. Also, it must be determined that the requisite skills of the positions can be acquired through training. Upon successful completion of the required training (on-the-job and/or formal), the employee will be reassigned laterally or promoted to the target position in accordance with established policies and procedures. Additional development of candidates beyond the target position will follow normal Merit Promotion Program procedures.

b. Eligibility. Any employee grade GS-9 or below, or wage grade equivalent, who is in a dead-end position and who has the potential to perform higher level work and the self-motivation to fulfill a training agreement consisting of both on-the-job training and formal training, may apply for announced upward mobility positions. Selected employees will be assigned to these

specially structured positions which will prepare them through experience and training to enter a technical, administrative, professional, or trade career.

c. Development Plans. When an employee is competitively selected for an upward mobility position, a development plan will be completed by the gaining supervisor with the assistance of the Development Branch staff. An approved copy of the Upward Mobility Development Plan will be furnished to the employee, the immediate supervisor, and to the Development Branch. (See appendix A for sample plan.) A development plan must be reasonable and attainable and consist of only training that will provide the employee with the necessary knowledges and skills for current duties or future duties of the target position. The plan may include:

(1) Formal educational courses offered at local schools and colleges, Department of the Army or Department of Defense courses, interagency courses, or courses from other appropriate educational agencies. The development plan will identify the specific academic courses or the academic area relevant to the target position as specified in the Qualifications Standards (OPM X-118 Handbook). All authorized expenses (i.e., tuition, required text, student and lab fees) associated with courses included in the Upward Mobility Development Plan will be paid for an employee who has been competitively selected for a target position.

(2) On-the-job training that will be meaningful and productive and provide for supervised development. The length of development on the job will vary according to the entry level of the employee and the individualized program designed to qualify the employee for the target position. The emphasis will not be on time, except for the minimum prescribed in appropriate qualification standards, but will be on demonstrated performance in the successful accomplishment of the major job elements of the target position.

(3) Self-development activities, such as extensive readings in selected areas, bibliography related to the career field, participation in professional societies, and attendance at local educational institutions during non-duty hours at employee's expense.

10. Restrictions on Formal Training. The following restrictions on training for advancement apply:

a. An employee cannot be trained in a non-government facility for the purpose of filling a position by promotion if

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there is another employee in the agency of equal ability and suitability who is fully qualified and available.

b. No upward mobility employee will receive education at government expense when the primary purpose of such education is to receive an academic degree.

c. If local college or university courses are included in the development plan, employees are expected to attend those classes only during non-duty hours. If a required course is offered during normal work hours, the employee's tour of duty can be changed or credit leave can be used.

d. Premium pay for overtime, night, holiday, or Sunday work is generally prohibited for employees assigned to training. Training sessions should be scheduled during periods when premium pay would not be paid.

11. Counseling and Evaluation. Employees desiring to enter the Upward Mobility Program will receive counseling before they enter the program to assure they understand their commitment and also at appropriately spaced intervals after they enter the program to assure they progress satisfactorily. This counseling will be accomplished by the Human Resources Office staff and appropriate supervisors. Supervisors will continually monitor the progress of employees, provide counseling or assistance, and initiate appropriate program changes. Supervisors of those employees competitively selected for a target position will complete in duplicate an ENG Form 4496-R, Upward Mobility Evaluation, not less than every 6 months until the employee is placed in the target position. All evaluations will be forwarded to the Human Resources Office, Development Branch, in duplicate, within 10 days after the reporting period. A copy of each evaluation will be placed in the employee's Official Personnel Folder. Trainees who fail to meet performance requirements of the formal training agreement may be reassigned to their former positions if they have not been filled or to other positions of similar duties and grades. Unsuccessful trainees who voluntarily changed to a lower grade to accept an upward mobility position will be reassigned to an appropriate position at that lower grade level. Repromotion to the employee's former grade level will be subject to competitive merit promotion procedures. In the event a vacant position does not exist at the appropriate grade level, personnel action will be initiated, including possible reassignment to a lower graded position or possible separation if no appropriate positions are available.

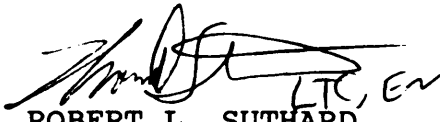
12. Reduction-in-Force. Formal program registrants will be carried in separate competitive levels as specified in Title 5,

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Code of Federal Regulations, Part 351.403b. Trainees occupying such positions will be granted protection during reduction-in-force from being displaced by journeyman or fully trained employees.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

1 Appendix
App A - Formal Development
Plan - Sample


ROBERT L. SUTHARD
for LTC, EN
Deputy Commander

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APPENDIX A

UPWARD MOBILITY PROGRAM
FORMAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

This plan is tailored specifically to the employee named below who has been competitively selected for an announced upward mobility target position. Competition for position was afforded through vacancy announcement number ____ (copy attached).

1. Name and SSN: James Crossing, 177-10-024.
2. Present Grade, Series, and Organization: GS-0802-4, Construction Division, Black Hills Area, Office Engineering and Technical Branch.
3. Target Grade and Series: Civil Engineering Technician, GS-0802-7.
4. Date Entered Development Plan: 1 Oct 90.
5. Duration of Development: Minimum of 3 years (1 year general and 2 years specialized experience).
6. Objective: To provide a systematic and planned means for James Crossing to acquire the knowledge and experience to meet the qualifications for target position of Civil Engineering Technician, GS-0802-7.
7. Supervisors: Immediate supervisor is Marie Strand, GS-12; Area Engineer is Jim Stipple, GS-13; and Chief of Construction Division is Elmer Sparkson, GS-15.
8. Reports: Ms. Strand and Mr. Crossing will complete their portions of the ENG Form 4496-R, Upward Mobility Evaluation, on 1 Apr 91 and every 6 months thereafter until the objective is reached. All reports will be submitted in duplicate to the Human Resources Office, ATTN: CEMRO-HR-E, within 10 days of due date.
9. Elements of Development Plan:
 - a. Formal Academic Instruction. Will pursue courses of study in the following academic areas: drafting, blueprint reading, estimating, computers, construction techniques, and basic construction contract management.

b. On the Job Training. Supervisor will provide training in the following activities: applying rules, regulations, and decisions to various activities; extracting data from records and reports; posting contract modifications and amendments to drawings and specifications; performing contract administration functions; researching criteria questions regarding Federal specifications and applicable construction industry standards; drafting contract modification sketches; preparing automated construction contract progress payments; preparing quarterly and annual budgets; and applying computer software in the establishment of an efficient means of monitoring contract milestones.

c. Other Formal Training. When appropriate, will be provided opportunities to attend courses such as Technical Writing and Writing Effective Letters. Employee is also encouraged to pursue self-development opportunities, such as participation in the Leadership Development Program.

10. I certify that this plan, if completed satisfactorily, together with the individual's previous experience, will satisfy the qualification requirements for the target position at the level stated in the plan.

Signature, Chief, Classification
and Staffing Branch,
Human Resources Office

11. I understand that failure to satisfactorily complete all requirements of this training agreement will result in my being reassigned into my former position if it has not been filled or to another position of similar duties and grades. If I voluntarily changed to a lower grade to accept the upward mobility position, I understand that I would be reassigned to an appropriate position at that lower grade level and that repromotion to my former grade level would be subject to competitive merit promotion procedures. In the event a vacant position does not exist at the appropriate grade level, personnel action will be initiated, including possible reassignment to a lower graded position or possible separation if no appropriate positions are available. I further understand that this

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development plan constitutes a training agreement and that it can be modified with the consensus of all concerned parties to reflect changing requirements of the target position or the legal aspects of the Government Employees Training Act.

Date

Employee's Signature

PLAN APPROVAL:

Supervisor's Signature

Chief of Staff Element Signature

Chief, Employee/Labor
Relations & Training Branch,
Human Resources Office